

Majority Message

U.S. SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

Senator Rick Santorum, Chairman

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, Vice Chairman

Defense Authorization, Iraq, and Economy



Tuesday, May 18, 2004

S. 2400 – National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2005

- S. 2400 authorizes \$422.2 billion in budget authority for defense programs in FY05, an increase of \$20.9 billion above last year's appropriations and an increase of 3.4 percent in real terms.
- The bill includes \$76.5 billion in procurement funding, a \$1.8 billion increase above the President's request; \$68.6 billion in funding for research, development, test and evaluation, \$800 million over the request; and \$120.5 billion for operations and maintenance, \$1.37 billion less than the request.
- The bill includes an across-the-board military pay raise of 3.5 percent, a permanent increase in the rate of family separation allowance from \$100.00 per month to \$250.00 per month, and a permanent increase in the rate of special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger from \$150.00 per month to \$225.00 per month.
- The bill authorizes a program, known as TRICARE Reserve Select, offering permanent elective coverage for Selected Reserve members under TRICARE. The program is a new premium-based option, under which TRICARE Standard would be available to any member of the Selected Reserve while in a non-active status, and the member's family.
- The bill adds \$925.0 million for additional up-armored high- mobility, multi-purpose, wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs) and add-on ballistic protection for medium and heavy tactical vehicles to provide force protection for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Highlights

In addition to items noted on above, S. 2400:

- authorizes \$10.2 billion for ballistic missile defense (BMD) research;
- authorizes \$3.4 billion for the procurement of 22 F/A-22 Raptor aircraft, a reduction of two aircraft from the request in order to improve scheduled production delivery;
- authorizes \$4.6 billion for the Joint Strike Fighter;
- authorizes \$1.5 billion for the DD(X) destroyer program, including \$22.1 million for detail design and advanced construction of the lead ship and an additional \$99.4 million for detail design of the second ship;

- includes several provisions that would improve the oversight of contractors performing security, intelligence, law enforcement and criminal justice functions in Iraq and other areas where U.S. forces are engaged in military operations;
- authorizes more than \$400 million above the President's budget request for enhanced health benefits for reservists, which will improve mobilization readiness and ensure continuity of health care services;
- adds \$107.4 million to the Army and Marine Corps for the Rapid Fielding Initiative and other equipment such as night vision devices and squad automatic weapons for individual soldier and Marine protection;
- adds \$603.2 million for force protection gear and combat clothing for troops;
- directs the Secretary of Defense to develop comprehensive Department of Defense policy and procedures for the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assault involving military members;
- authorizes an additional \$150.0 million to fund the first increment of advanced construction of the first LHA(R) Amphibious Assault Ship;
- supports the Army's transformation initiative by authorizing \$3.2 billion in research and development funding for Future Combat Systems, the Non-Line of Sight Cannon system and the Non-Line of Sight Launch System; and
- adds \$46.9 million to field an additional 7 Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams (WMD-CST), which will result in 55 teams by the end of FY05.

Iraq WMDs

The recent news regarding sarin and mustard gas discoveries in Iraq serve to remind us that Saddam Hussein did have a vigorous weapons of mass destruction program.

- Sarin is an extremely toxic substance that disrupts the nervous system. Saddam Hussein's regime insisted it destroyed its sarin stockpile *before the 1991 Gulf War*.
- The new sarin find is a "binary chemical projectile." Meaning it has two chambers that keep the chemical components inside separate until they are fired by an artillery piece. After firing, the rotation of the artillery shell in flight causes the barrier between the two substances to mix, creating sarin. The device releases the agent when it lands and explodes. However, when used in an improvised explosive device (IED), the chemicals do not properly mix, so they produce only very small traces of sarin gas.
- Binaries are very difficult to detect because they can be easily made with common chemicals in relatively simple pesticide factories.
- By Hussein's own admission, Iraq possessed thousands of chemical weapons and tons of chemical weapon agents:
 - Some 4,000 tons of ingredients to produce poison gas, including sarin.
 - 550 artillery shells filled with mustard gas.
 - At least 3.9 tons of VX, a deadly nerve gas, and 805 tons of precursor ingredients for the production of more VX.
 - 8,500 liters of anthrax.
 - 500 bombs fitted with parachutes for the purpose of delivering poison gas or germ payloads.
 - 107,500 casings for chemical weapons.
 - At least 157 aerial bombs filled with germ agents.
 - 25 missile warheads containing germ agents (anthrax, aflatoxin, and botulinum).
- In each case, Hussein claimed to have destroyed the weapons and materials of mass destruction in accordance with U.N. resolutions. But the regime, which kept tens of thousands of pages of detailed information about its illegal weapons of mass destruction programs, offered no proof of their destruction — *not a piece of paper convincingly documenting the alleged destruction, not a dismantlement site, not a single smashed chemical warfare bomb*.
- There are thousands of weapons caches throughout Iraq. New sites are discovered all the time. This is not an issue of securing sites, it is an issue of finding them.
- Nearly 10,000 square miles larger than California, Iraq's vast countryside and sprawling cities provide countless hiding places for weapons and materials of mass destruction that can in many cases fit in the smallest of rooms.
- The Iraq Survey Group, in its continuing work, has already discovered extensive physical evidence of a widespread covert weapons program that put Saddam Hussein in breach of U.N. resolution 1441 calling for Iraq to disarm.



US Department of Defense

Talking Points — SecDef, Chairman Troop Visit - May 13, 2004

Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, today made a surprise visit to Baghdad, where they spoke with U.S. troops serving there, met with military and Coalition Provisional Authority officials and toured Abu Ghraib prison. Following are highlights of their remarks at a town hall meeting with the troops at Camp Victory.

- U.S. troops have helped to liberate 25 million people in Iraq. They have also performed numerous acts of kindness, generosity and compassion and showed the world the character of the United States and the character of its armed forces.
- The abuse alleged at Abu Ghraib is stunning. Investigations are underway and those involved will be brought to justice.
- It will not be an easy path to turn Iraq from a repressive dictatorship to a stable and prosperous country that respects all groups, understands human rights and is at peace with its neighbors. But when U.S. troops fighting in the Global War on Terror look back on their service, they will be proud of and say it was worth it.
- The goal is not to have U.S. troops in Iraq; rather, it is for Iraqis to take charge of their country and their security. U.S. troops are working hard to help recruit, train, equip, deploy and mentor the Iraqi security forces, so responsibility can be passed to them as soon as they are capable of taking it.

Progress in Iraq

- Two ceremonies were held today in the northern Iraq city of Qarrayah. Sixty Iraqi soldiers graduated from Iraqi Civil Defense Corps basic training, and 20 graduated from the primary leader development course. U.S. Army soldiers teach the basic six-week training program, which is designed to transform Iraqi civilians into soldiers. Instruction includes basic rifle marksmanship, the law of war, human rights, and security and communication skills. The leader development course is a two-week program that trains junior soldiers, teaching them the skills they need to become non-commissioned officers.
- Iraq's soccer team earned a place at the Summer Olympics in Athens by defeating Saudi-Arabia 3-1 yesterday. The visit will be the first by the team to the Olympics. Player Hawar Mulla Mohammed, who scored the winning goal, said the entire country deserves the win. National Olympic Committee of Iraq President Ahmed Al-Samarrai called the victory the biggest moment in Iraqi Olympic history.
- Full authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was formally handed back to the Iraqi people during a ceremony yesterday in Baghdad at the ministry's headquarters. Ambassador L. Paul Bremer congratulated Minister of Foreign Affairs Hoshiyar Zebari and his staff for their accomplishments, including Iraq's reinstatement into the Arab League, the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.



JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN ROBERT F. BENNETT

RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

MAY 11, 2004

The Economy is Firing on All Cylinders

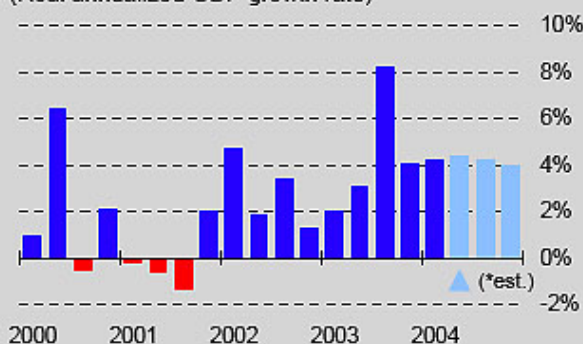
Employment surged again in April as the economy continued its brisk expansion. Payrolls have added more than one million jobs over the last eight months, and the unemployment rate has edged down to 5.6%. Economic growth remained strong in the 1st quarter, the tenth straight quarter of growth, and recent activity in manufacturing, services, and housing continues to be vibrant. Consumer prices show slight acceleration in inflation, even outside of food and energy prices. But private forecasters expect low inflation, continuing economic growth, and robust jobs growth.

Highlights

- GDP grew at a 4.2% annual pace in the 1st quarter. Private forecasters see growth of 4.6% in 2004, the highest in 20 years (Fig. 1).
- Payroll employment increased by 288,000 in April, bringing job gains to 1.1 million over the last eight months. Unemployment fell to 5.6%.
- Consumer price inflation has risen. Excluding food and energy, core consumer price inflation accelerated in March to 1.6% from 1.2%.
- The Federal Reserve kept its short-term interest rate at 1%, a 45-year low, but hinted that rates will soon gradually rise.

Strong Growth Continues into 2004

(Real annualized GDP growth rate)



Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Blue Chip Economic Indicators*

Job Gains Continued in April

Payroll employment rose by 288,000 jobs in April. Eight straight months of job gains have now added 1.1 million jobs to payrolls. Manufacturing payroll jobs have risen for three consecutive months after almost four years of declines. The *unemployment rate* fell to 5.6%, well below its recent peak of 6.3% last June. The *household survey*, used to calculate the unemployment rate, showed 278,000 job gains in April; the household measure puts job gains at 1.3 million over the last eight months. *Initial jobless claims* have fallen to a three and a half year low.

GDP Growth Continued Above 4% into 2004

GDP grew at a 4.2% annual rate in the 1st quarter. The average annual 5.5% pace of growth in the past three quarters is the strongest such performance in twenty years. *Consumer spending* fueled growth in the 1st quarter, driven by gains in wages and salaries and after-tax income. *Business investment* grew at a 7.2% annual rate as double-digit growth in equipment and software spending again offset declines in commercial construction. Inventory investment added to growth, but by less than some had expected. *Government spending* also contributed, with rising defense spending more than offsetting declining state and local spending. *Export and import* growth slowed but, on balance, trade also added to growth.

Business Activity Remains Strong

The *Institute for Supply Management's (ISM) index of manufacturing activity* has been above 60 for six months, indicating vigorous expansion (Fig. 2). The employment index has been steadily rising, suggesting increased hiring in manufacturing. Expansion in services, too, is vigorous; the *ISM services index* set a new record high in April. *Durable goods orders and orders from factories* showed surges in March, with broad-based gains across

Consumer Price Inflation Has Increased

Inflation in consumer prices has accelerated, even when energy and food prices are excluded. Inflation in the *personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index*, the Federal Reserve's preferred measure of consumer inflation, was an annual 3.2% in the 1st quarter, up from 1.0% in the prior quarter. Excluding significant contributions from higher energy and food prices, the "core" PCE index showed 2.0% inflation in the 1st quarter, up from 1.2% a quarter earlier. Inflation in the *consumer price index* also accelerated, but *producer price inflation* remains in check, except for crude materials prices. Prices of many metals remain elevated, and oil has neared \$40 per barrel.

Fed Keeps Rates Steady; Warns of Future Hikes

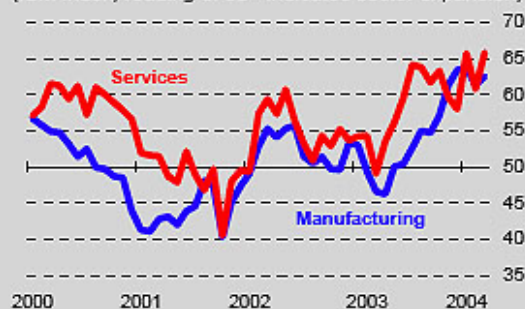
Despite some acceleration of inflation, the *Federal Reserve* kept its target short-term interest rate at 1% at its May meeting. The Fed no longer fears deflation, believes that long-term inflation expectations remain contained, and now sees risks as balanced between higher and lower inflation. Noting that "hiring appears to have picked up," the Fed sent its strongest signal yet that *short-term interest rates* will begin to rise soon and continue to rise at a "measured" pace. Markets expect a series of quarter-point increases in the Fed's target interest rate this year. *Long-term interest rates* have moved up somewhat (Fig. 3).

Housing Remains Resilient

Residential construction spending remains strong. In March, *existing home sales* grew at the fastest pace in over two years and *new home sales* accelerated 8.9% to set another record high. The 1st quarter national homeownership rate stayed at a record high 68.6%.

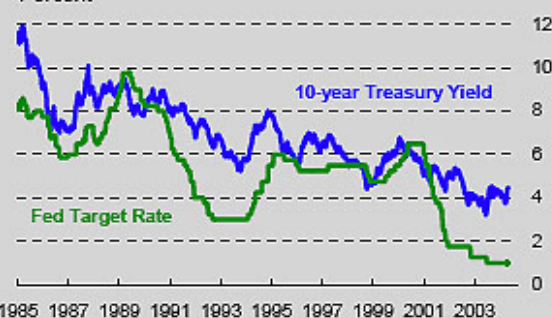
Rapid Expansion in Business Activity

(ISM Index, reading of 50+ indicates sector expansion)



An End to Historically Low Interest Rates?

Percent



Upcoming Indicators

GDP – An updated look at GDP growth for the 1st quarter arrives May 27.

Employment – The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports May's employment situation on June 4. Jobless claims data arrive every Thursday.

Inflation – The Producer Price Index is scheduled to be released May 13, and the Consumer Price Index follows on May 14. The data will be watched closely by the Fed for signs of inflation.

Federal Reserve – The Fed meets June 24 to decide about short-term interest rates. An increase in rates is expected by markets at least by the Fed's August meeting.

288,000 New Jobs Created in April Over 1.1 Million Jobs Created Since August 2003

Recent News

- **New job figures and other recent indicators show that America's economy is strong and getting stronger, and that the President's jobs and growth plan is working.** In total, over 1.1 million jobs have been added since August, with 8 consecutive months of gains.
- **April's increase in employment remained strong and well in excess of market expectations.** 288,000 net new jobs were created in April — and February and March increases were revised upward, for a combined upward revision of 66,000.
 - The household survey showed a similar increase in employment, up 1.3 million since August.
 - The national unemployment rate edged down to 5.6% in April — falling 0.7 percentage points from its peak of 6.3% in June 2003. At 5.6%, the unemployment rate is below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.
 - Manufacturing employment increased 21,000 in April, and was revised up for February and March. Manufacturing employment has risen for three consecutive months. These were the first gains in this sector since July of 2000.
 - Over the past year, the unemployment rate has fallen in 44 of the 50 states.
 - Weekly unemployment insurance claims have fallen to their lowest level since 2000.

President Bush's Actions Are Helping to Drive Our Economic Recovery

- The President's Jobs and Growth tax relief package helped drive the strong improvement in our economy. It raised the level of economic activity and productivity, which will result in higher incomes and living standards for American workers. Recently released data confirm that the economy is strong and growing stronger:
 - **The American economy grew at a strong annual pace of 4.2 percent during the first quarter of 2004 — well above the historical average, and continuing the strong growth seen over the previous two quarters.** Economic growth over the last three quarters has been the fastest in nearly 20 years, at a 5.5 percent annual rate that would double the real size of the economy in 13 years. The President's policies have helped propel the recovery forward, putting more money in the pockets of America's families and laying a foundation for growth and job creation now and for years to come.
 - **Household spending continues to be strong.** As a result of the President's 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, personal consumption levels have risen significantly. **Real after-tax incomes** are up by 10% since December 2000 — substantially better than those following the last recession.

- **Retail sales** other than motor vehicles in the first quarter of 2004 increased 11.6 percent, more than double the average annual rate of growth over the last decade.
- **Consumer confidence** is at its highest level in 3 months and is rising. The Conference Board said its index of consumer confidence increased 4.4 points to 92.9 in April, from 88.5 in March.
- **New housing construction** in March surged to levels near those of December 2003, when they were at their highest levels in almost 20 years.
- In the first quarter of 2004, the **national homeownership rate** reached a record high of 68.6 percent, beating the record set in the previous quarter.
- **Minority homeownership** set a new quarterly record of 50.8 percent in the first quarter, up 0.2 percentage points from the fourth quarter and up 1.5 percentage points from the first quarter of 2003.
- **Inflation** remains restrained, with the core CPI (Consumer Price Index) rising only 1.6 percent and the core finished-goods PPI (Producer Price Index) rising only 0.7 percent over the last 12 months.
- **Mortgage rates** remain near historic lows, making homebuying easier and more affordable.
- **American companies are reporting historic levels of growth.**
 - **Productivity** grew from 2000 to 2003 at the fastest 3-year rate in more than 50 years. This has bolstered profits and will lead to significantly higher real wages for workers.
 - More **manufacturers** have been reporting increased activity and new orders than at any time in the last 20 years. The **ISM Manufacturing employment index** in April was at its highest level since 1987.
- **The President's jobs and growth policies have put the economy on the road to recovery-but there is more work to be done.** The President has outlined a six-point plan to create even more job opportunities for America's workers and keep America the best place in the world to do business. The plan includes: enabling families and businesses to plan for the future with confidence by making tax reductions permanent; making health care costs more affordable and predictable; reducing the burden of lawsuits on our economy; ensuring an affordable, reliable energy supply; streamlining regulations and paperwork requirements; and opening new markets for American products and services.
- **America has a choice: It can continue to grow the economy and create new jobs as the President's policies are doing; or it can raise taxes on American families and small businesses, hurting economic recovery and future job creation.** A pro-growth agenda, strong education system, and help for American workers to gain the skills to secure good jobs are the right ways to respond to the challenges of our growing and changing economy.

Defense of Marriage: Massachusetts

Gays and lesbians have a right to live as they choose, but they don't have a right to redefine marriage.

- Marriage is a core social institution that serves the public good and is especially critical for children.
- Children need mothers and fathers. Decades of studies show that children do best when raised by a married mother and father.
- If traditional marriage is no longer the standard, heterosexual Americans likely will be much less inclined to get married and provide a stable environment for children.

The American people, not the courts, should decide. We can't let activist judges in Massachusetts impose a radical new definition of marriage on the public.

- Americans support traditional marriage 2 to 1.
- This flurry of judicial activity is an orchestrated campaign by activists to bypass the legislatures.
- Currently, 12 states are facing court challenges to their marriage laws, 35 states have introduced legislation in the last year aiming to preserve traditional marriage, and 7 states are considering state constitutional amendments in their legislatures.

This is a national crisis that requires a national response – a federal constitutional amendment.

- This week, Massachusetts by court order begins issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples from the Commonwealth and other states. Out-of-state couples will seek recognition in their home states.
- The campaign to undermine marriage already is spreading like wildfire to all 50 states, with court decisions pending on 4,000 marriage licenses issued in San Francisco and 3,000 licenses issued in Oregon that affect couples from most states.
- The only way to defend traditional marriage is to pass a federal constitutional amendment.

Top Five Reasons to Defend Marriage

1. Marriage belongs in the hands of the American people. Four judges in Massachusetts have no business rewriting the moral rules our kids are going to live by.
2. Marriage is about affirming the ideal. And when it comes to children, science and common sense both say: mothers and fathers both matter to children.
3. Redefining marriage sends a terrible message to the next generation: alternative family forms are just as good as traditional families, and children don't need mothers and fathers.
4. It's just wrong for the law to pretend that two men being intimate are the same as a husband and wife, especially when it comes to raising children.
5. Marriage isn't a special interest, it's a common good. Every American benefits from a healthy marriage culture. ALL Americans pay the price in increased taxes, social disorder, and human suffering when mothers and fathers fail to get and stay married.

Update on State-Level Same-Sex Marriage Action

Updates this week:

Massachusetts — Same-sex couples from throughout the nation began marrying legally. Some out-of-state couples promised to return to their home states and file federal lawsuits to force their states to recognize their marriages and to overturn federal DOMA.

Louisiana — A preliminary vote to send a constitutional amendment to the ballot taken on May 12 came up one vote short, but the proposal is not dead.

Minnesota — The legislative session expired with the Democrat-controlled state Senate refusing to permit a floor vote on a state constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. The amendment easily passed the GOP-controlled state House.

Missouri — The legislature sent a state constitutional amendment to the voters. That initiative will be on the August primary or November general election ballot.

North Carolina — A state constitutional amendment was introduced in the state Senate that would define marriage as man-woman in the state constitution.

Overall highlights:

12 states are facing court challenges to their marriage laws. Same-sex couples are currently challenging the marriage laws in Arizona, California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, and West Virginia. Add to those cases the lawsuits filed in Alaska and Montana seeking to force the state to grant marital benefits to same-sex couples. Finally, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court imposed same-sex marriage on that Commonwealth in a November 2003 order, and the Vermont Supreme Court forced that state to create same-sex civil unions.

35 states have seen legislation introduced in the last year aiming to preserve the traditional definition of marriage.

7 states are still considering state constitutional amendments in their legislatures. Proposed constitutional amendments are still pending in nine state legislatures — Alabama, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Tennessee, and Vermont.

At least 6 states will have state constitutional amendments on the November 2004 ballot. Ballot initiatives will appear on the November ballot in Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Utah. (Missouri's initiative may appear in August.)

Another 5 states are facing signature-gathering campaigns to place state constitutional amendments regarding same-sex marriage on the November 2004 ballot, including Arkansas, Michigan, Montana, Ohio, and Oregon.

The Washington Times

Editorials/Op-Ed

May 17, 2004

The bench vs. people

By Orrin Hatch and Jim Talent

In the debate over traditional marriage, the cultural dominoes are falling in the wrong direction. Activist judges, who specialize in taking issues away from the people and deciding those issues instead, intend to make traditional marriage a thing of the past. Their decisions, like the one that will allow Massachusetts clerks to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples this week, and the aggressive political and legal strategy driving them, make clear that protecting traditional marriage will require amending the Constitution.

America's founders believed, as James Madison put it, that the legislative branch "necessarily predominates" in a representative democracy. We all learned in civics class that the legislative branch makes the law, which means the judicial branch doesn't. Most state constitutions go beyond separating the branches, and two-thirds explicitly prohibit judges from legislating. With only the power to interpret the law, the judiciary is supposed to be, in Alexander Hamilton's words, the "least dangerous" branch.

Times have changed. Judges have become the most dangerous branch by following former Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes' view that the law is "whatever the judges say it is." Judges cannot change the literal words of the Constitution or a statute, so they make law by changing the meaning of those words. The obvious danger is that if the law means whatever judges say it means, judges control the law, run the country and define the culture.

Since before the founding of the republic, legislatures enshrined the traditional view that marriage is a union of a man and a woman. Only in the last decade have judges attempted to substitute their own views, effectively amending state constitutions by judicial fiat and imposing new marriage policies. Neither the people nor their legislatures chose any such thing.

In addition to judges acting like legislatures, some rogue public officials are acting like judges. Although California law defines marriage as between a man and a woman, for example, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom simply declared it unconstitutional, and same-sex couples from at least 46 states have obtained a marriage license there. Similarly, same-sex residents of more than 30 states have obtained marriage licenses in Multnomah County, Ore. Litigation is inevitable as they challenge their home states to recognize these same-sex unions.

This crisis requires a constitutional solution for at least three reasons. First, amending the Constitution is the only way of reining in the activist judges who will otherwise undermine traditional marriage. Neither judicial self-restraint nor the separation of judicial from legislative power is enough. Nor, it appears, are explicit bans on legislation by judges in state charters. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court's decision that same-sex couples may wed, which goes into effect this week, is a legislative act openly defying the Massachusetts Constitution's edict that judges "shall never exercise the legislative" power.

Second, the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) will no longer effectively protect traditional marriage. While the Constitution requires that states give each other's judicial proceedings "full faith and credit," it also lets Congress make exceptions. Supported by 79 percent of House members, 85 percent of senators and signed by Bill Clinton, DOMA guarantees that one state need not recognize another's non-traditional union. Even so, federal and state court decisions since DOMA have made legal analysts, enthusiastically or grudgingly, concur that DOMA itself likely will not survive a court challenge before activist judges.

Third, amending the Constitution of the United States is the only way for the people of the United States to take this issue back. "We the people" established the Constitution, and only we can rightfully amend it by the single process outlined in the charter, a process that excludes the judicial branch. No amendment on any subject becomes part of the Constitution unless supported by two-thirds of Congress and three-fourths of the states. Amendments by judges, by contrast, defy the people and lack their consent.

The first right of the people is to govern themselves. Activist judges take away that right, sapping democracy's legitimacy and vitality. When courts deny the people the right to decide cultural issues for themselves, they undermine both the freedom and the opportunity to form consensus provided by self-government. Americans on both sides of the marriage debate deserve to have their voice heard and the potential to make it effective. Such civic participation in elections, through legislatures, or in amending the Constitution, is an antidote to judicial activism. Defending the people's right to govern themselves generally and protecting traditional marriage specifically require responding to this judicial activism by amending the U.S. Constitution.

*Sen. Orrin Hatch is a Utah Republican and chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.
Sen. Jim Talent is a Missouri Republican.*



THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

(Topeka, Kansas)

For Immediate Release

May 17, 2004

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The sacred institution of marriage should not be redefined by a few activist judges. All Americans have a right to be heard in this debate. I called on the Congress to pass, and to send to the states for ratification, an amendment to our Constitution defining and protecting marriage as a union of a man and a woman as husband and wife. The need for that amendment is still urgent, and I repeat that call today.



Senate Democrats' Obstructionism at the Crossroads

JOBS & Manufacturing: S. 1637, the JOBS Bill, would both repeal a European tariff on nearly 100 American-made products and cut taxes for manufacturers in the United States. Although the JOBS Bill passed the Finance Committee 19-2 and enjoys broad, bipartisan support, Senate Democrats voted to block a vote on the measure on March 24th and April 7th.

Medical Liability: Patients across America are denied critical health care, including emergency and obstetric care, because doctors and hospitals are closing their doors from skyrocketing liability costs. Senate Democrats blocked a comprehensive bipartisan bill in July 2003 and two additional targeted efforts to protect access to ERs and OB-GYNs on February 24th and April 7th.

Energy: Comprehensive Energy Legislation has been thwarted for 3 years. If passed it would deliver nearly 1 million American jobs, increase renewable and alternative sources of energy, and reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. Democrats also voted to block a specific effort to create an estimated 650,000 jobs through energy tax relief on April 7th.

Workforce Investment: S. 1627 is projected to help more than 940,000 dislocated workers get the training they need to get good jobs. Passed by both the House and Senate (unanimous Senate voice vote on November 14th, 2003), Senate Democrats refuse to appoint conferees so that the bill will become law.

Judges: In an unprecedented, unconstitutional challenge to the Senate's advise and consent role, a minority of Democrats have prevented six highly qualified Bush federal appeals court nominees from receiving a fair, up-or-down confirmation vote, and have promised to use partisan filibusters to prevent confirmation of additional judges. Bush recently used his constitutional power to recess appoint two of them – Judges Pryor and Pickering – noting that if given an up-or-down vote, all these nominees would be serving on the bench.

Class Action: S. 1751 creates a Consumer Bill of Rights to ensure that victims aren't denied fair compensation while their trial lawyers escape with the lion's share of court awards. On October 22nd, 2003, Senate Republicans and nine Democrats came one vote short of over-coming the Democrat Leadership's obstruction.

Faith-based/Charities: S. 272/S. 476 passed the Senate on April 9th, 2003 with overwhelming bipartisan support (95 to 5) and similar legislation resoundingly passed the House on September 17th, but Senator Daschle is blocking a conference committee to resolve House-Senate differences and allow a final vote. The CARE Act will spur more charitable giving and assist faith-based organizations and community charities.

Welfare Reform: On April 1st, 2004, Senate Democrats voted to block a measure to reauthorize the landmark 1996 welfare reforms. H.R. 4 would build on the success of the 1996 reforms to strengthen work requirements and promote healthy families, as well as provide an additional \$6 billion in childcare funding.

Asbestos Care & Jobs: The FAIR Act, S. 2290, would establish a \$124 billion fund to care for asbestos victims and create the financial stability to allow businesses to grow and create jobs. Senate Democrats voted to block the measure on April 22nd.

Improved Highways: Although the Senate passed S. 1072 on February 12, 2004 by a lop-sided vote of 76-21, Democrats now refuse to appoint negotiators to allow final passage. This initiative would use \$318 billion from the Highway Trust Fund to employ hundreds of thousands of Americans in the service of improving highways across the U.S.



Taking Action to Create & Protect Jobs:

Senate Republicans Are Creating Jobs for Americans through the Jobs Creation & Retention Agenda



☐ Create and protect American jobs by passing an Energy Bill

☐ Create jobs and defend against junk lawsuits by passing Class Action Reform

☒ Develop entrepreneurship by passing a strong Small Business Administration Bill

☐ Protect jobs, pensions and shareholders by passing an Asbestos Bill

☐ Equip American manufacturers and create jobs by passing the Jumpstart our Business Strength (JOBS) Act

☐ Create jobs by passing the Homeland Investment Act to encourage foreign re-investment in the U.S.

☒ Create jobs and improve America's infrastructure by passing a Highway Bill

☒ Provide workers with training for new or better jobs through a Workforce Investment Bill

☐ Create jobs by passing a strong Economic Development Agency Bill

☒ Create jobs and protect families by passing a Budget

☒ Help America's unemployed workers by extending unemployment benefits

☒ Reduce the tax burden on American families, create jobs, and grow savings and investment by passing the Jobs and Growth Bill